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## CORRESPONDENCE.

*[Correspondents are requested to write briefly and to the point. No attention will be paid to anonymous communications.]*

## The Delaware Valley Ornithological Club.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE AUK:—

*Dear Sirs:*—The majority of the readers of 'The Auk' have no doubt spent a good deal of time in the study of bird migration and in the systematic arrangement of their field notes with a view to reaching general facts in regard to the subject. While a single observer making careful notes for a number of years can determine many interesting facts, such as the average time of arrival and departure of the various birds at his station, and the relation of the 'migration waves' to meteorological variations; still there are many other points bearing on the subject of migration which it will be impossible to study without the assistance of other workers in the same field.

Recognizing the advantages to be gained by combined work, a number of ornithologists residing in the vicinity of Philadelphia have organized the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, for the study of the birds of southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey, with especial reference to their migration in the valley of the Delaware River. The active membership of the club is limited and consists only of those who have had considerable experience in field work and are known to be thoroughly reliable. An associate membership has been added to include beginners in the study who can furnish data subject to the approval of the active members, and in return can receive the benefit of their experience.

The following is a brief outline of the methods, of work of the Club. Daily field notes are taken by the members, and recorded systematically on monthly charts containing vertical columns for the days and horizontal ones for the birds in the order of their occurrence during the month. The spaces are sufficiently large for recording the number of birds seen (as recommended by Mr. Batchelder, in the April number of 'The Auk'), and short abbreviated notes as to singing, mating, nesting, etc. Across the top of the chart are blanks for recording the curve of temperature variation, the direction and force of the wind, and other correlative notes. In addition to these individual charts there are "combined monthly charts," on which the notes of all the observers are recorded followed by private marks indicating their various stations. These charts are passed from one member to another and when all the data have been recorded are reproduced by a copying process and copies furnished to each observer. In the same way it is proposed to have yearly charts on which will be recorded the first and last occurrence, arrival and departure of bulk, and other general facts relating to each species.

The Club meets in Philadelphia twice a month, when all matters of importance are discussed and specimens exhibited.

Another aim of the Club is to keep a complete record of all the birds which occur in southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey, and

of the breeding habits of those species which remain in this district during the summer. These observations will cover a wider field than those on migration, the latter being confined to the immediate vicinity of the Delaware River south of Trenton, as it is thought that better results can be obtained by restricting the country covered by the observations to one river rather than by including other river or coast districts.

During the present year the Club has seven regular observers, — Wm. L. Baily at Wynnewood, Pa.; Samuel N. Rhoades at Haddonfield, N. J.; J. Harris Reed at Tinicum Island, Pa.; Geo. Morris at Olney, Pa.; Dr. Spencer Trotter at Swarthmore, Pa.; Chas. A. Voelker at Chester, Pa., and Witmer Stone at Germantown, Pa.

The results so far have been highly satisfactory and have far surpassed our expectations. We therefore thought that by stating our methods of work other observers similarly situated might be led to "join their forces" and gain the benefit of each others' work as we have done.

This work need not interfere in any way with that being conducted by the Department of Agriculture, as the correspondents of the Department can fill out their schedules as heretofore, or they can substitute the combined report of the Club, as may be desired. In any case the results obtained by the combined efforts of a number of observers in a small district cannot fail to be of service to the Department when it undertakes to work out the migration through the country at large.

At the close of the year we hope to present to 'The Auk' an abstract of the migration of 1890 as it occurred in the valley of the Delaware, with a map showing the district covered by each observer.

WITMER STONE.

*Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa.*

June 5, 1890.

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## NOTES AND NEWS.

JOHN HENRY GURNEY, an Honorary Member of the A. O. U., of Northrepps, near Norwich, England, died April 20, 1890, at the age of seventy-one years. He was "the son of the world-wide famous Joseph Henry Gurney, of Earlham, whose name men hold dear for his philanthropy, and for his writings in defence of civil and religious liberty. From his boyhood's days John Henry Gurney took a lively practical interest in bird-life and common objects of the country. He began his connection with the Norfolk and Norwich Museum by a gift to that institution when he was only ten years old. In the year 1849 he was chosen President of the Museum, which office he filled to the day of his death." For many years he has been a recognized authority on the Raptorial Birds of the world, and the magnificent collection of these birds — one of the finest extant — in the Norfolk and Norwich Museum was brought together mainly by his efforts, and is almost wholly his gift. He prepared and